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ABSTRACT

The report examines demographic and attitudinal characteristics of the 44 students who entered the Appalachia Educational Laboratory's Employer-Based Career Education (AEL/EBCE) program in September 1972 and January 1973. The data were obtained from student information sheets completed in February 1973. Regarding home and family life, the majority of students lived with both natural parents, in male dominated family settings. All but one of the students were unmarried. Frequency of dating varied considerably between the sexes and the class groups. The students' attitudes toward school were neutral and expressed neither strong approval nor disapproval, but most students indicated that they would continue in school even if attendance was voluntary. A substantial number of students rated their homework assignments as difficult. With respect to vocational and educational plans, one-half indicated a desire to graduate from college, and despite their involvement in the EBCE program, in some cases for as many as five months, many made their plans without help from anyone. Twenty-four tables, comprising over half the document, follow the text. (Author/JB)

TR 36

Employer-Based Career Education

Selected Demographic Data from Students in the 1972-73 School Year

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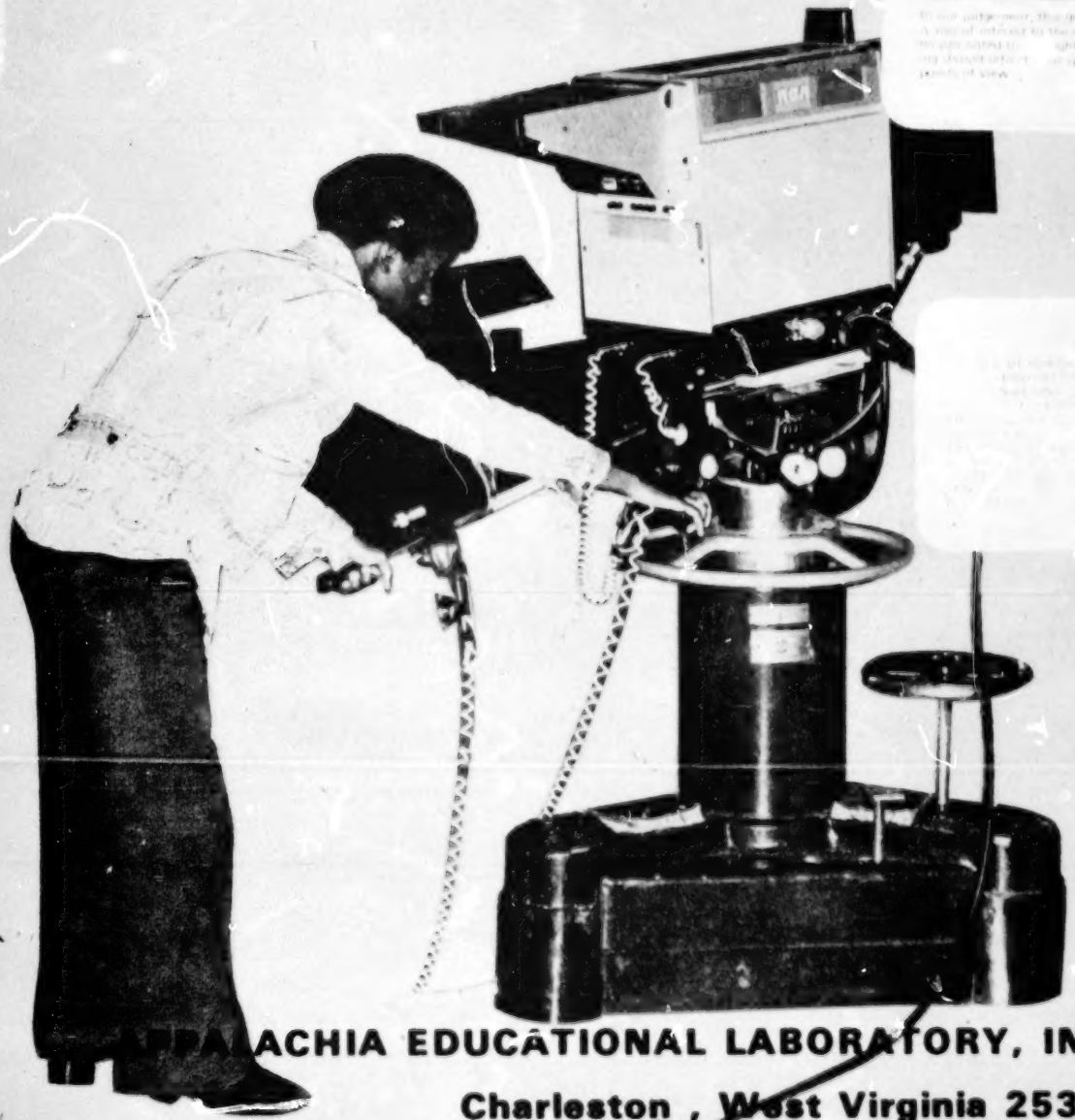

APPALACHIA EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, INC.
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Cover picture: Sam Burge, an EBCE student learns the fundamentals of operating a television camera at WMUL-TV in Nitro, West Virginia

Employer-Based Career Education

Selected Demographic Data from Students in the 1972-73 School year

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TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 36

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DIVISION
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Preface

The following report is one of a series emanating from the 1972-73 evaluation of the Employer-Based Career Education (EBCE) program conducted by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc. The purpose of this report is to provide background information about the students who volunteered for the alternative to conventional high school education offered by EBCE. Information concerning the students' home and family life, their attitudes toward school, and their vocational and educational plans are highlighted within the report.

Dr. John T. Seyfarth of the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies analyzed the data and prepared the written material for this report. He was under contract to the Laboratory during the summer of 1973. The EBCE evaluation was conducted and supervised by Dr. James H. Sanders, Evaluation Specialist with the Laboratory, and under the general direction of Dr. Charles L. Bertram, Director of Research and Evaluation for the Laboratory.

Dr. Joseph M. Fisher, Associate Educational Development Specialist, and Dr. John R. Magan, Associate Educational Development Specialist of the EBCE operations and design staff, provided critical reviews of the early drafts of the report. Their intensive review helped to insure accurate interpretation of the findings and that the results of the first year evaluation would be used in program planning and operation by the EBCE staff.

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Introduction

The data contained in this evaluation report have to do with a number of demographic variables related to the home life, attitudes, social habits, and plans of students in Appalachia Educational Laboratory's Employer-Based Career Education program.

Forty-four students participated in the program. Twenty-one entered in September, 1972, and are identified in this report as Group I. Group II consisted of 23 students who came into the program in January, 1973. All were seniors who volunteered for the program and all were attending a Kanawha County (West Virginia) high school before they entered the program.

Most of the data contained in this report were taken from information sheets completed by students in February, 1973, as part of the Student Information System questionnaire.[1] The information is reported in three sections--Home and Family Life, Attitudes Toward School, and Vocational and Educational Plans. A final section summarizes and draws conclusions. Since the preponderance of information in the report is tabular in nature, the data tables are appended following the narrative description of the findings.

Much of the information in this demographic report is similar to that obtained through student interviews and reported in Technical Report No. 42 entitled Employer-Based Career Education: Students' Attitudes Toward the Program as Indicated by an Analyses of Interview Data. One major difference is that the data on which the present report is based were collected in February of 1973 and the data for Technical Report No. 42 were obtained in June of 1973.

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[1] Behavioral Consultants. Manual of Student Information System (SIS). (Salt Lake City: Behavioral Consultants, 1971).

Home and Family Life

The sex composition of the two groups of students is shown in Table 1. Group I had only four females out of a total membership of 21, while Group II had a majority of girls--13 out of 23 students.

More than seven out of ten of the students in the EBCE program lived with both natural parents (Table 2). Four individuals did not live with either parent. Eight students reported their parents divorced or separated, and two had a parent deceased (Table 3).

The father was boss in a majority of the families of EBCE students except for Group I girls. Data in Table 4 show the other responses about equally divided between students who considered their mother to be the boss and those who said that the family did not have a boss.

Table 5 reports findings on the number of different families with which students had lived. Two students reported having lived with a family other than their natural family. Group I males were the most mobile of the student groups, as shown in Table 6. That group averaged 3.0 moves apiece, while the other groups averaged about two moves.

All except one of the EBCE students were unmarried. Of those, Group II females were the most active socially. All reported dating several times monthly or oftener. The Group II girls apparently weren't dating their male classmates, however; males in Group II were the least socially active. One-half said they dated several times yearly or never (Table 7).

Seven of the students--three from Group I and four from Group II--reported that they were under the care of a physician, as shown in Table 8.

A majority of the males in both groups either reported driving their own or a family car (Table 9). Fewer than one-third of the girls in Group II and only one of four in Group I had access to an automobile.

Table 10 reports figures on spending habits of the EBCE students. Boys spent more than girls; about six out of ten boys reported spending more than $10 weekly. Four of the Group I boys and five from Group II spent more than $20 weekly; however, three of those students were spending money they had earned themselves. Weekly earnings reported by students who held part-time jobs are reported in Table 11.

Attitudes Toward School

Students in the EBCE program were asked a series of questions having to do with attitudes toward school. Unfortunately, it isn't clear what referent the respondent had in mind when answering those questions, whether the EBCE program or previous school experiences.

The respondents tended to be neutral toward school, expressing neither strong approval nor disapproval. Three groups had identical scores of 2.8 (based on a 5 point scale in which 1.0 was the most favorable response), and the fourth group averaged 2.7. The results are reported in Table 12.

Much more favorable responses were recorded by those who answered a question about their course of study. Some students did not understand what was meant by "course of study" and did not respond. Using the same scale as above, ratings ranged from 1.4 to 1.9 (Table 13).

A substantial number of EBCE students rated their homework assignments as difficult. Figures from Table 14 show that one-half of the Group II girls who answered the question reported that homework assignments were "too easy" or "much too easy". In all other groups, a majority responded that homework was either "too hard" or "much too hard". The lack of a "just right" response may have forced students to choose alternatives which did not fairly represent their views.

In Table 15 results are reported from the question, "Is the homework you are given useful?" A majority of students of both groups and sexes answered affirmatively. Since most of the instructors in the EBCE academic areas allowed several days to complete assignments, homework in the traditional sense of an overnight obligation was uncommon. This fact may have affected these results.

Although their feelings about school are not consistently positive, the EBCE students overwhelmingly indicated that they would continue in school if attendance were voluntary (which it is, except for parental and possibly peer pressure). The figures in Table 16 show that only 6 of the 44 participants said that they would likely not attend school if they had the option of quitting. The same sentiment was reflected more strongly in answers to the question, "Do you want to graduate from high school?" Every student answered "definitely" or "yes" to that question.

Table 17 reports the incidence of dropouts among program participants' brothers and sisters.

There is some indication that the two groups of students were somewhat dissimilar in their home school achievement. The grade point average for Group I (9th grade through 11th grade) was 1.99 whereas the incoming grade point average for Group II was 2.45. A listing of the frequency count of student grade point average by group is presented by Table 18.

Attendance reports were checked for each student from his/her previous year of attendance in the Kanawha County Schools. Data for Group II were incomplete, hindering the comparisons of the two groups of students. The mean number of days absent for Group I for their 11th grade in school was 15.52 days. Complete data were available for only 14 of 23 students of Group II; however, the mean number of days absent for those 14 students was 14.43 for the previous year (see Table 19).

Vocational and Educational Plans

Information reported by the EBCE students relative to their vocational and educational plans and their attitudes toward tentative career choices are reported in this section.

More students indicated that they would attend college than chose any other single category of response in Table 20. The response format for the question is somewhat confusing, and it is necessary to make some assumptions regarding the students' plans.

Fourteen students had not decided on an occupation at the time they answered these questions (Table 21). Of those who had made such a decision, most reported that the decision had been made in high school. Table 22 reports on students' feelings about their vocational choices. Of the 30 who indicated that they had made a decision, only 9 reported that they felt "certain," "very certain," or "positive" that their decision was the right one, and only 1 of the 9 was female. Seven of 16 Group I students (45 percent) who had made a choice felt that their choice was the right one, whereas only 2 of the 14 Group II students (14 percent) felt that strongly. Differences in self-assurance regarding career choice appear to be closely related to sex.

Students who indicated that they had made plans for the future were asked whether the plans were made alone or in consultation with others, and if so, with whom. The answer sheet unfortunately did not provide for multiple answers even though students are encouraged to consult several individuals before arriving at a career decision. A striking conclusion about the responses in Table 23 is that a large number of individuals apparently made their plans without help from anyone. This is particularly surprising in view of the fact that some of these youngsters had been involved in the EBCE program for five

months. Of those who did consult others, the most common choices were their parents.

Discussion

As a group, the 44 students who took part in the EBCE program held lukewarm to positive attitudes about school, although most reported that they intended to finish high school, and one-half (21 of 44) said that they planned to graduate from college. Nine others were undecided, but considering college (Table 24). By contrast, a majority in every group except Group II girls rated their homework difficult.

Of the vocational choices listed by these students in February, 19 were occupations for which a college degree is a common expectation. The picture which emerges is of a group of not very academically-oriented students (with some obvious exceptions) who nevertheless were expecting to enter vocations for which a college degree is needed.

The two groups do not differ much with respect to these generalizations except that Group II contained fewer individuals planning to enter vocations requiring a college degree. Twelve individuals from Group I indicated such intentions, while 7 from Group II planned to enter vocations requiring a college degree.

While it appears that some of these students may have been making unrealistic plans, whether they turn out to be unrealistic depends, of course, on the students' persistence in reaching their objectives in the face of obstacles. More information about the students' motivations in entering the Employer-Based Career Education program might be helpful in assessing their plans.

Appendix

Data Tables

Table A1

Sex Composition by Group*

	M	F	Total
Group I	17	4	21
Group II	10	13	23
Total	27	17	44

*Group I students entered the program in September, Group II in Janaury, and both groups completed the program in June.

Table A2

Number and Percent of Students Living With One or Both Natural Parents

	Group I		Group II		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Both natural parents	15	71.4	17	74.0	32	72.7
One natural parents	4	19.0	4	17.4	8	18.2
Other	2	9.5	2	8.7	4	9.1

Table A3

Status of Students' Own Parents

	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
Parents Living Together	14	2	8	10	34	77.3
Parents Divorced	2	2	2	0	6	13.6
Parents Separated	0	0	0	2	2	4.5
One Parent Deceased	1	0	0	1	2	4.5

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A4

Number and Percentage Responses to--
'Who's the Boss in Your Family?'

	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No One	2	11.8	2	50.0	2	20.0	4	30.8	10	22.7
Father	11	64.7	0	00.0	6	60.0	7	53.8	24	54.5
Mother	4	23.5	1	25.0	2	20.0	2	15.4	9	20.5
Other	0	00.0	1	25.0	0	00.0	0	00.0	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A5

Student Reports on the Number of Families Resided with by Group and Sex

No. of Families	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
1	16	4	9	13	42	95.5
2	1	0	1	0	2	4.5

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A6

Student Reports on Frequency of Moving by Group and Sex

Number of Moves	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
0	3	0	3	4	10	22.7
1-2	7	3	2	4	16	36.4
3-5	3	1	5	5	14	31.8
6-8	4	0	0	0	4	9.1

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A7

Self-Reported Dating Patterns by Group and Sex

	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
Married	0	0	0	1	1	2.3
Engaged	3	0	0	2	5	11.4
Going Steady	1	0	2	2	5	11.4
Several Times/Wk.	7	3	0	4	14	31.8
Several Times/Mo.	2	0	3	4	9	20.4
Several Times/Yr.	1	1	4	0	6	13.6
Never	2	0	1	0	3	6.8
No Answer	1	0	0	0	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A8

Number of Students Reporting Themselves Under the Care of a Physician

	M	F	Total	Percent of Total Group (N=44)
Group I	2	1	3	6.8
Group II	3	1	4	9.1

Table A9

Students Reporting Access to an Automobile
by Group and Sex

The number of students who:	Group I M	Group I F	Group II M	Group II F	Total* N	Total* %
Drive Own Car	7	0	4	1	12	27.3
Drive Family Car	5	1	3	3	12	27.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A10

Student Spending Habits--Amount Spent Weekly
by Group and Sex

	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
$5 or less	1	5.9	3	75.0	1	10.0	4	30.8	9	20.5
$6 - $10	6	35.3	1	25.0	3	30.0	6	46.1	16	36.4
$11 - $20	5	29.4	0	-	1	10.0	3	23.1	9	20.5
More Than $20	4	23.5	0	-	5	50.0	0	-	9	20.5
No Response	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A11

Student Earnings From Part-Time Jobs by Group and Sex

Weekly Earnings	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
$5 or less	1	0	0	0	1	2.3
$6 - $20	3	0	1	3	7	15.9
More then $20	5	1	5	0	11	25.0

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A12

Student Attitudes Toward School
by Group and Sex

Enjoy School? (Scale Value)	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very much (1)	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	2	15.4	3	6.8
Yes (2)	6	35.3	1	25.0	5	50.0	3	23.1	15	34.1
It's okay (3)	6	35.3	3	75.0	3	30.0	6	46.1	18	40.9
No (4)	3	17.6	0	-	1	10.0	1	7.7	5	11.4
Not at all (5)	1	5.9	0	-	1	10.0	1	7.7	3	6.8
Average Rating	2.8		2.8		2.8		2.7			

Table A13

Student Attitudes Toward Their Course of Study
by Group and Sex

Liking for course of study (Scale Value)	Group I M	Group I F	Group II M	Group II F	Total* N	Total* %
Like it very much (1)	7	1	5	3	16	36.4
Like it some (2)	4	1	4	5	14	31.8
Don't care (3)	2	0	0	2	4	9.1
Dislike it (4)	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Dislike it very much (5)	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Other	4	2	1	3	10	22.7
Average rating	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.9		

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A14

Students Rate Difficulty of Homework Assignments--
Number and Percent Responses by Group and Sex

	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Much too hard	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	2.3
Too hard	9	52.9	3	75.0	6	60.0	6	46.1	24	54.5
Too easy	6	35.3	1	25.0	4	40.0	5	38.5	16	36.4
Much too easy	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	7.7	1	2.3
No answer	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	1	7.7	2	2.5

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A15

Students Rate Usefulness of Homework--Summary of Responses by Group and Sex

Homework Useful?	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Definitely	5	29.4	0	-	0	-	3	23.1	8	18.2
Yes	8	47.0	4	100.0	8	80.0	8	61.5	28	63.6
No	3	17.6	0	-	2	20.0	1	7.7	6	13.6
Definitely Not	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	1	7.7	2	4.5

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A16

Summary of Student Responses to Question.... "Would you go to school if you didn't have to?"

Response	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
Definitely	3	1	0	2	6	13.6
Yes	11	2	4	5	22	50.0
Probably	0	0	6	4	10	22.7
Probably not	1	1	0	2	4	9.1
No	1	0	0	0	1	2.3
Absolutely Not	1	0	0	0	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A17

Number and Percent of Students With a Brother or Sister Who Dropped Out of School

	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	15	88.2	3	75.0	10	100.0	12	92.3	40	90.9
1 or More	2	11.8	1	25.0	0	-	1	7.7	4	9.1

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A18

Frequency of Students by Grade Point Average Internal*

	Group I	Group II
3.50-4.00	1	3
2.50-3.49	2	7
1.50-2.49	14	11
0.50-1.49	4	2
0.00-0.49	0	0

*The Grade Point Average is calculated from all grades earned from Ninth Grade until the time of entry into the EBCE program.

Table A19

Frequency Count of 11th Grade Days Absent for Group I*

	0-5 Days	6-10 Days	11-15 Days	16-20 Days	More Than 20 Days
Group I n = 21	4	6	4	0	7

*The mean number of days absent for Group I was 15.52. Although data for Group II were incomplete, the mean number of days absent for the 14 students (Group II, n-23) for which data were available was 14.43.

Table A20

Students' Self-Reported Plans--Number and Percent by Category, Group, and Sex

Future Plans	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
High School Graduation	2	17.6	0	-	4	40.0	2	15.4	8	18.2
Correspondence School	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	2.3
Technical-Trade School	1	5.9	0	-	1	10.0	1	7.7	3	6.8
4-Year College	7	41.2	2	50.0	4	40.0	6	46.1	19	43.2
Apprenticeship	0	-	0	-	1	10.0	0	-	1	2.3
Employment Only	3	17.6	1	25.0	0	-	3	23.1	7	15.9
Other	3	17.6	1	25.0	0	-	1	7.7	5	11.4

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A21

Students' After High School Plans--Number and Percent Responses by Category, Group, and Sex

Decided on occupation--	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Still undecided	5	29.4	0	-	4	40.0	5	38.5	14	31.8
In high school	10	58.8	4	100.0	6	60.0	7	53.8	27	61.4
In junior high	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	2.3
In elementary school	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	2.3
Other	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	7.7	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A22

Students' Ratings on Self-Assurance of Vocational Choices (Undecided Eliminated)

Self-Rating	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very uncertain	1	8.3	0	-	1	16.7	1	12.5	3	6.8
Uncertain	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Somewhat certain	5	41.7	3	75.0	3	50.0	7	87.5	18	40.9
Certain	2	16.7	1	25.0	0	-	0	-	3	6.8
Very certain	2	16.7	0	-	1	16.7	0	-	3	6.8
Positive	2	16.7	0	-	1	16.7	0	-	3	6.8

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A23

Involvement with Others in Making Plans for Future--Responses by Category, Group, and Sex (Undecided Eliminated)

Decides future plans--	Group I		Group II		Total*	
	M	F	M	F	N	%
By myself	9	1	5	8	23	52.3
With parents	4	2	3	1	10	22.7
Parents decide	0	0	0	1	1	2.3
With couselor	0	0	0	1	1	2.3
With relative	0	1	0	0	1	2.3
With friend	0	0	0	1	1	2.3

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

Table A24

Students' Future Plans--Frequency and Certainty of Intention to Graduate from College

Want to graduate from college?	Group I				Group II				Total*	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Definitely	6	35.3	1	25.0	1	10.0	3	23.1	11	25.0
Yes	2	11.8	1	25.0	5	50.0	2	15.4	10	22.7
Maybe	3	17.6	1	25.0	2	20.0	3	23.1	9	20.5
Not really	1	5.9	1	25.0	1	10.0	0	-	3	6.8
No	4	23.5	0	-	1	10.0	1	7.7	6	13.6
Not at all	0	-	0	-	0	-	3	23.1	3	6.8
Other	1	5.9	0	-	0	-	1	7.7	2	4.5

*Total of male and female students in both groups and percent of all 44 students in both groups.

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